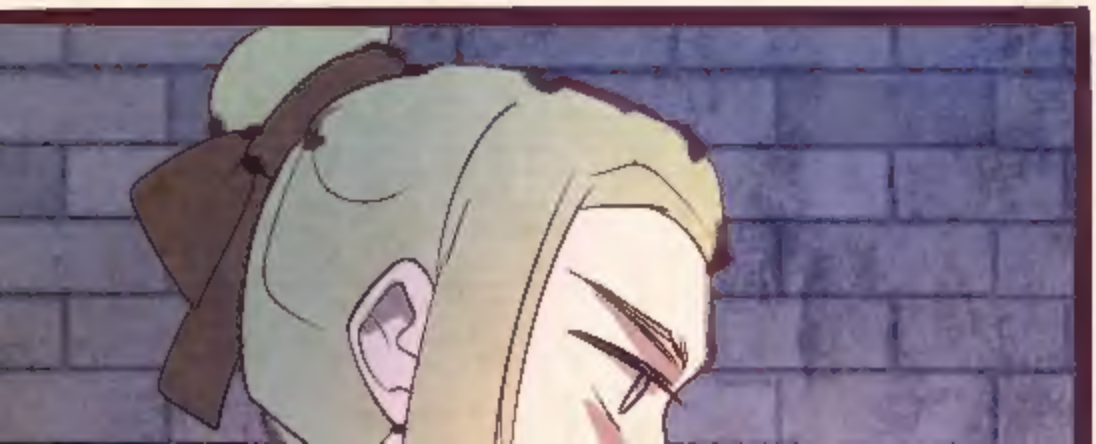


GREETINGS...

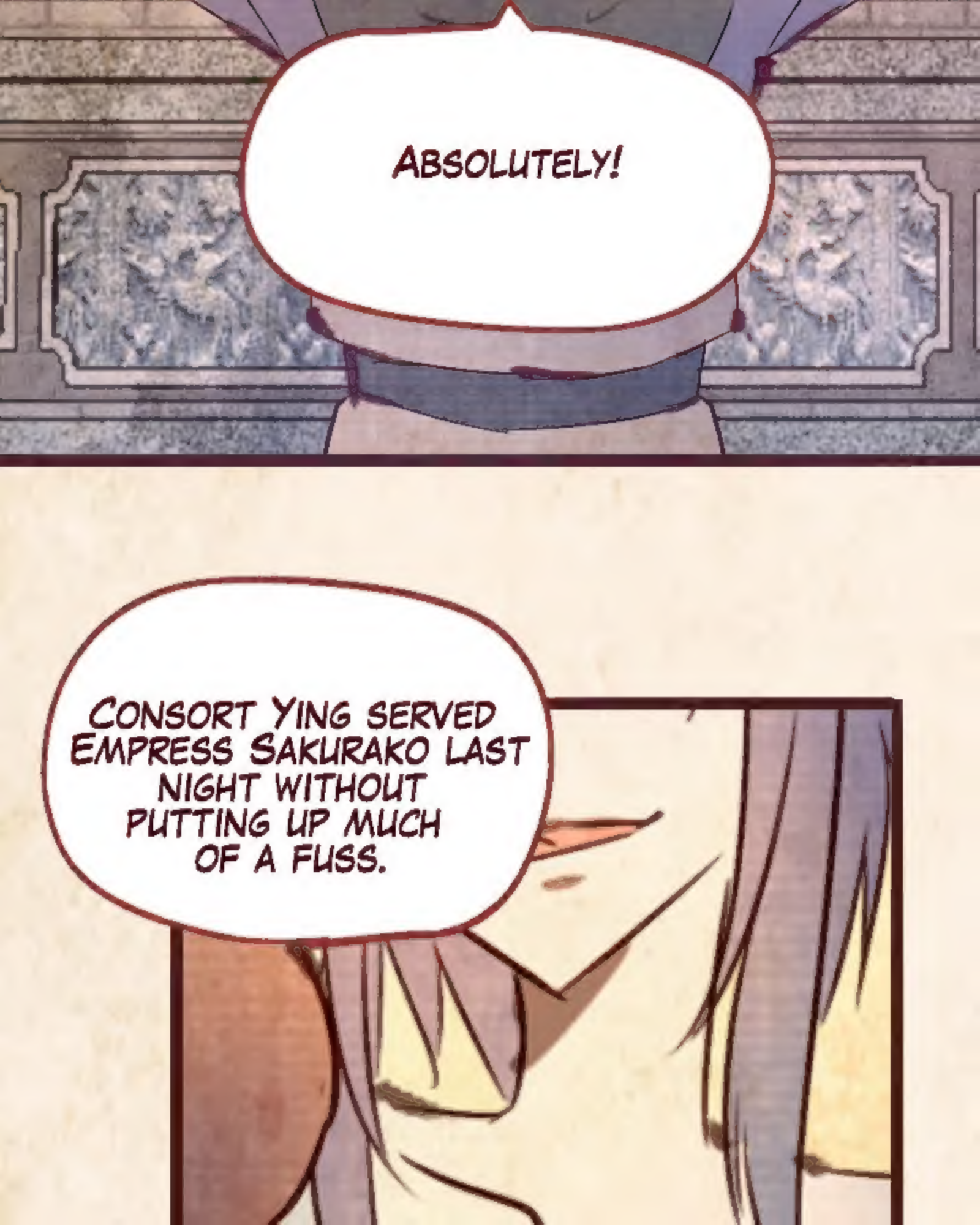
...TO THE 7TH COURT DEITY TO BE.

TSK...

I NO LONGER CARE FOR THAT POSITION. DID YOU FORGET ABOUT MY NEW TITLE?
OH, RIGHT! FORGIVE MY INSOLENCE...

CONGRATULATIONS ON BECOMING THE ROYAL EMPRESS DOWAGER OF PHANTOM PARADISE!
LONGEVITY TO YOUR ROYAL MAJESTY! IT'S AN HONOR TO SERVE YOU!

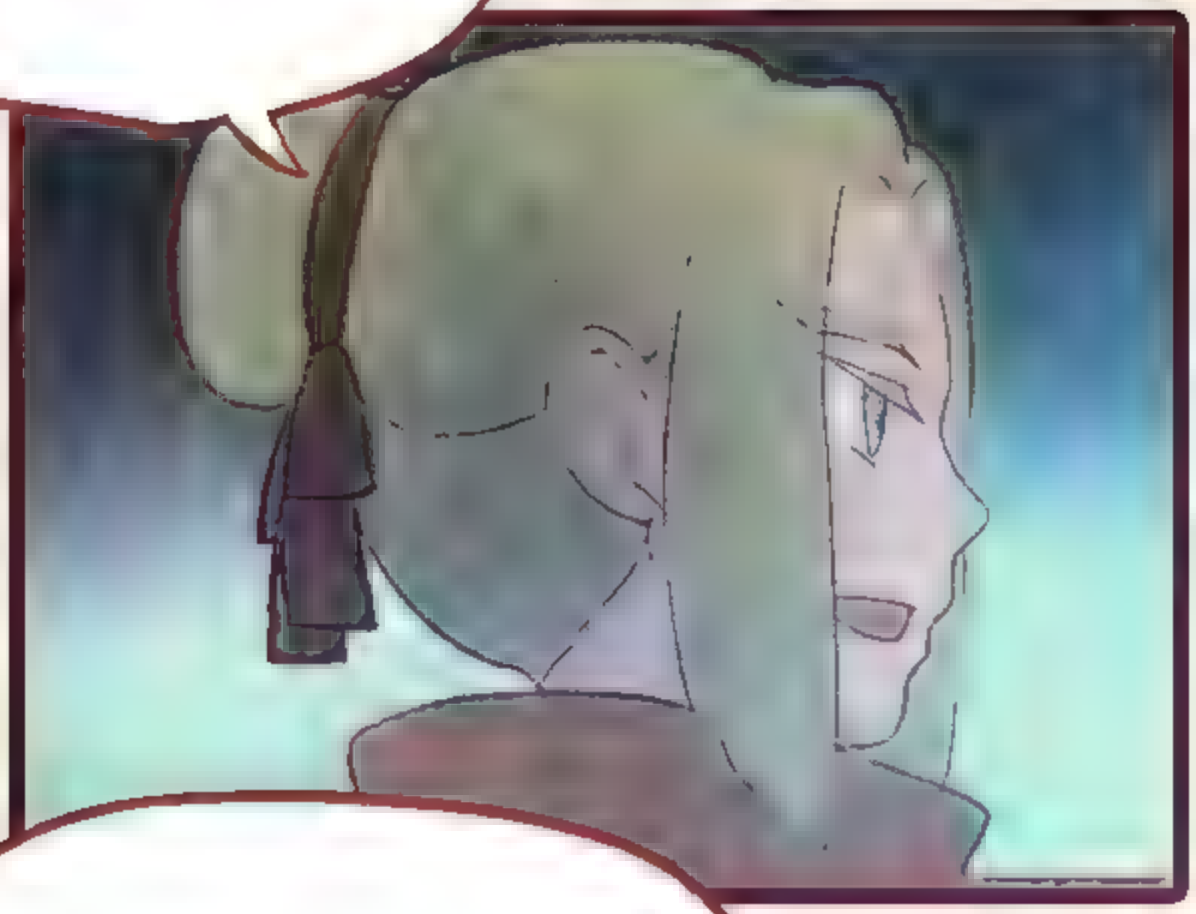
HAHAHAHA! THAT'S THE SPIRIT! AND DON'T FORGET IT.
DO YOU HAVE ANY GOOD NEWS WITH REGARDS TO THE TASK I GAVE YOU?


ABSOLUTELY!
CONSORT YING SERVED EMPRESS SAKURAKO LAST NIGHT WITHOUT PUTTING UP MUCH OF A FUSS.

HE'S BEEN GETTING HARDER AND HARDER TO CONTROL LATELY... OFTEN IGNORING THE ORDERS YOU'VE GIVEN HIM...

BUT YOUR TACTIC OF MANIPULATING HIM

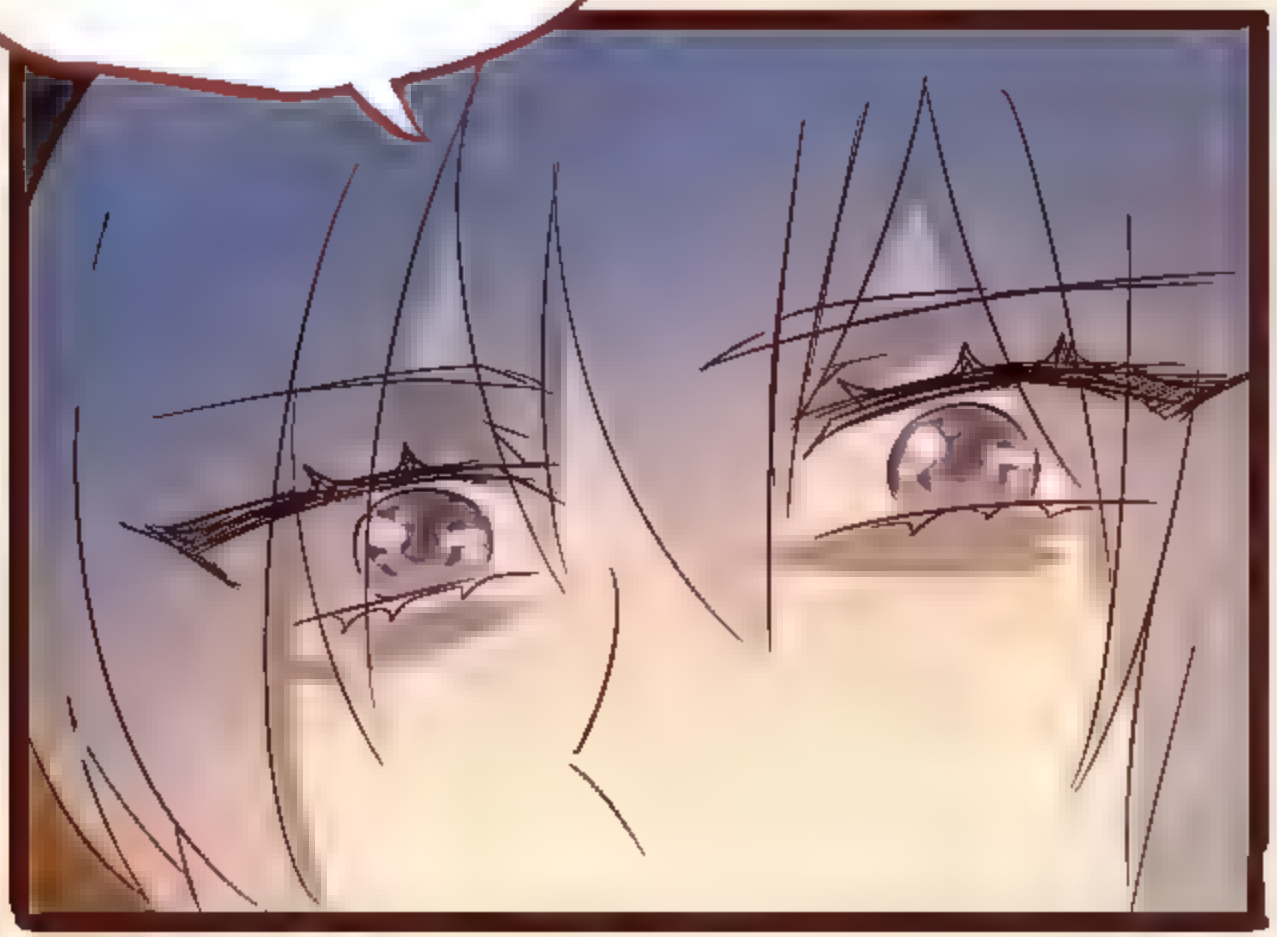
BY TARGETTING HIS BROTHER WORKED LIKE A CHARM!



EASY, RIGHT? ALL YOU NEED IS A SIMPLE STRATEGY FOR A SIMPLE MIND.

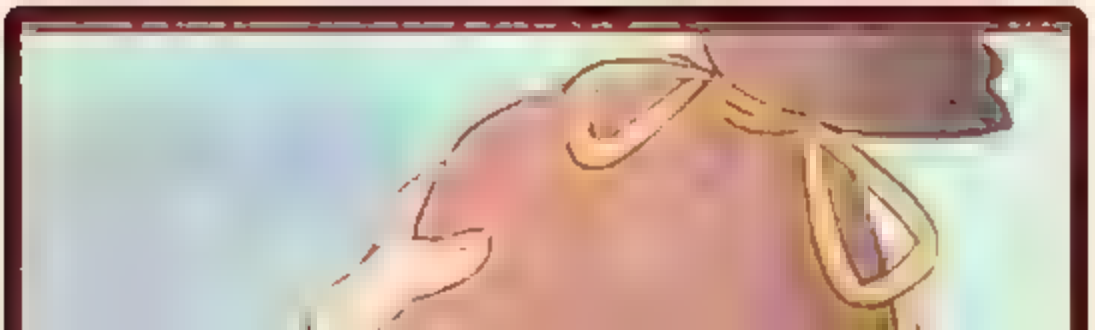
AND BESIDES...
I'M SURE YOU WON'T FIND A SHORTAGE OF PEOPLE DISSATISFIED WITH MY HOT TEMPERED SON TO USE.

ANYWAYS,
HERE YOU GO-



YOUR PAY WITH AN
EXTRA TIP.

THANK YOU,
YOUR MAJESTY!

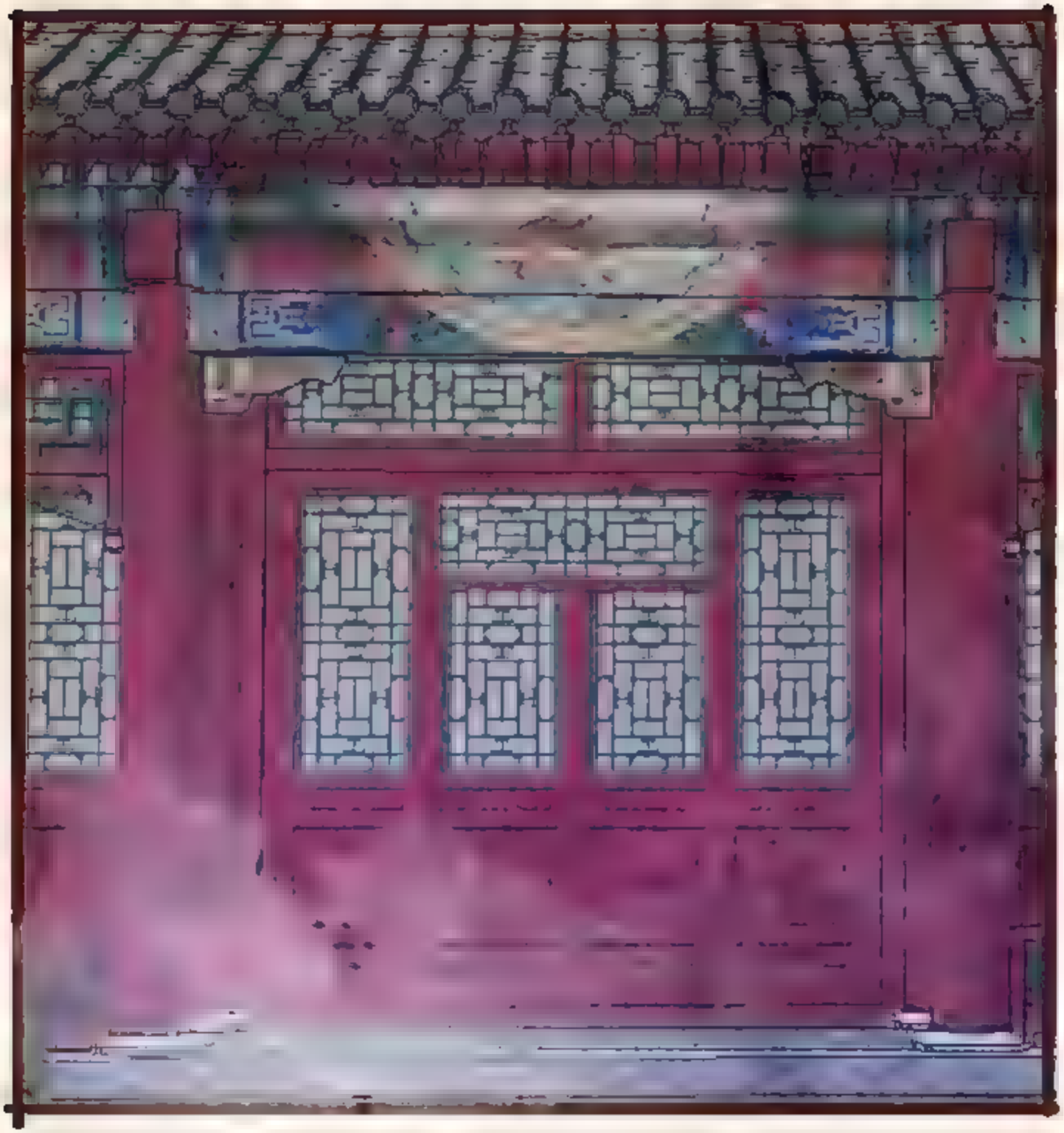


I'LL CONTINUE WORKING MY HARDEST TO MAKE SURE THE TWINS ARE UNDER CONTROL!
AS IT SHOULD BE YOU, PUNK.

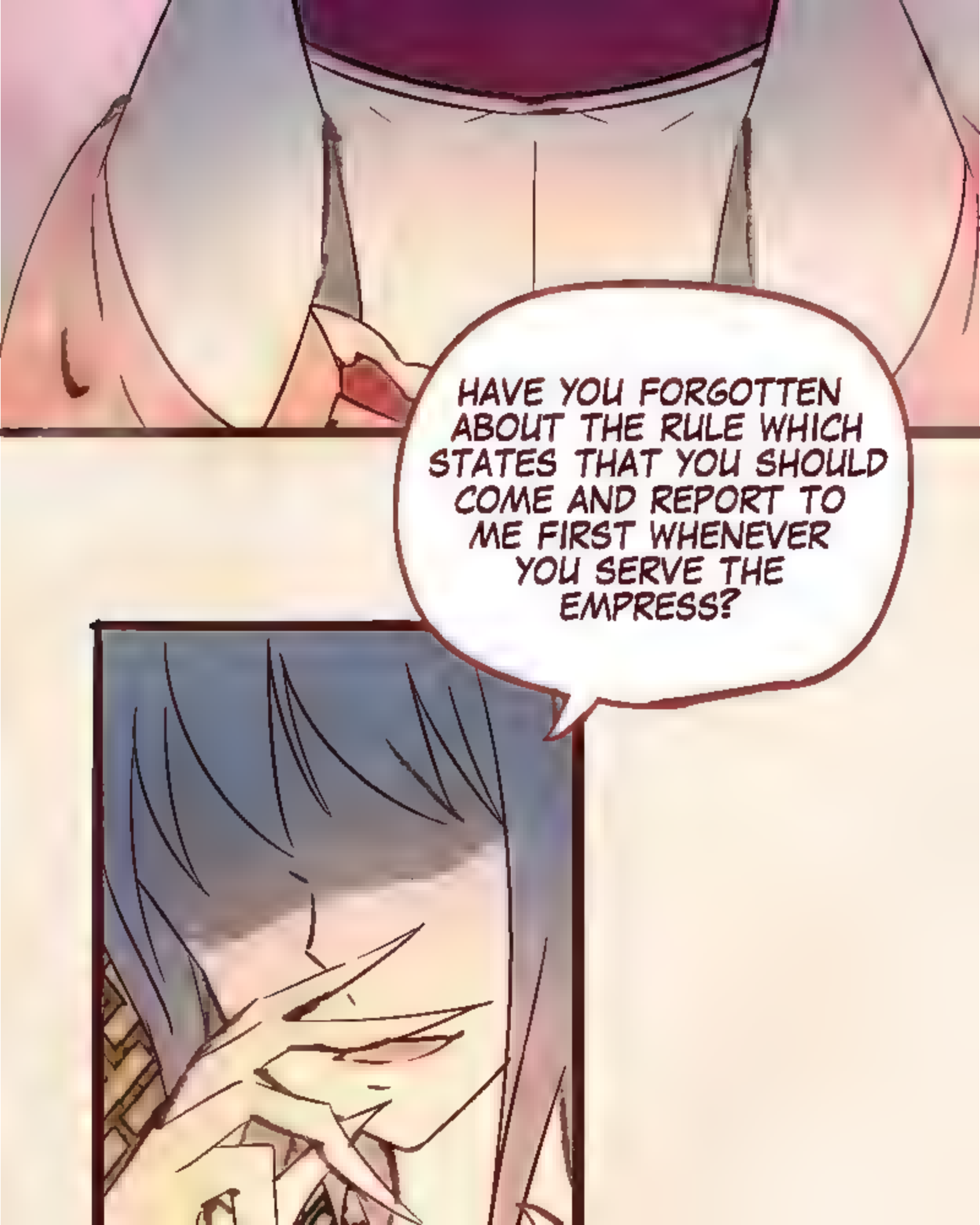
As long as Consort Ying is on track to become the favoured consort...

...I WILL GUARANTEE

YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A LONG LIFE OF INFLUENCE AND RICHES!



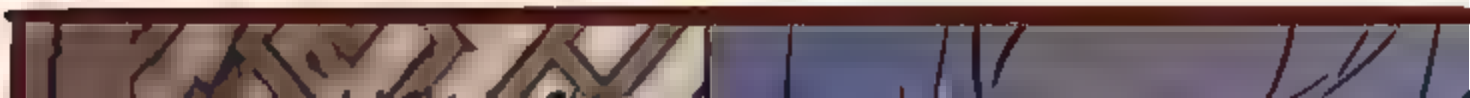
YOU'RE LATE.


HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE RULE WHICH STATES THAT YOU SHOULD COME AND REPORT TO ME FIRST WHENEVER YOU SERVE THE EMPRESS?

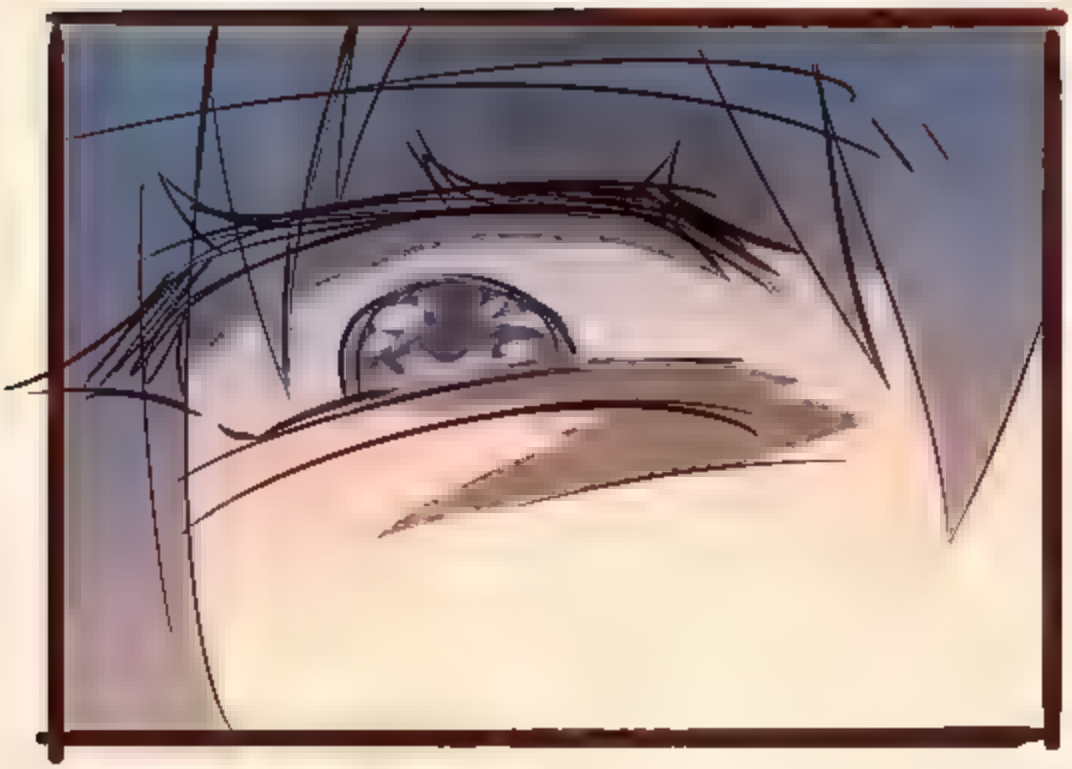
OR IS THIS AN ACT OF REBELLION UNDER A NEW MASTER?

HOW DARE I...

YOU WILL ALWAYS BE IRREPLACEABLE TO ME "MOTHER". I SWEAR, I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU.



...THE WAY YOU'RE STARING AT ME AND THE WORDS YOU'RE SAYING DON'T MATCH.



DID YOU FORGET ABOUT THE PRICE I PAID TO SAVE BOTH YOU AND YOUR BROTHER'S LIVES? HOW MUCH I INVESTED TO DEVELOP THE BEAUTY AND MANA RESPONSIBLE FOR PUTTING YOU TWO ABOVE THE OTHER CONSORTS?

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR YOU AND YOUR BROTHER'S COMFORTABLE LIFESTYLE...
...YET YOU STILL HAVE THE GUTS TO STARE AT ME THAT WAY?

WE NEVER ASKED FOR ALL OF THESE EXTRAS...IF I KNEW WHAT WAS IN STORE FOR US,

I WOULD'VE RATHER CHOSE DEATH OVER GETTING CONTINUOUSLY EXPLOITED BY YOUR STUPID CONTRACT!

YOU CHOOSE DEATH? THAT'S EASY TO SAY, AFTER BEING PAMPERED, AND WELL FED. BUT LET ME REMIND YOU ABOUT THE TIME YOU WERE IN RAGS, ON YOUR KNEES, BEGGING AND PULLING ON MY SKIRT...

...ALL WHILE REPEATEDLY TELLING ME HOW YOU'RE WILLING TO GO THROUGH ANY HELL AS LONG AS I SAVE YOUR BROTHER'S LIFE.

NOW THAT YOU GOT WHAT YOU BEGGED FOR AND MORE, DID YOU FINALLY DECIDE TO BITE THE HAND THAT FED YOU?

Tsk-
I SAID "I" WAS WILLING TO GO THROUGH ANY HELL,

NOT MY BROTHER!!!
COUNTLESS TIMES...
WHENEVER YOU WEREN'T
SATISFIED WITH MY RESULTS
WHILE DOING YOUR DIRTY WORK...

...YOU'D TORTURE MY BROTHER TO "ENCOURAGE" ME TO PERFORM BETTER!
WE NEVER ACHIEVED TRUE HAPPINESS UNDER YOU!
...
I STOPPED TORTURING YOUR BROTHER, DIDN'T I?
BUT THERE WILL ALWAYS

BUT THERE WILL ALWAYS BE OTHERS WANTING TO EXPLOIT HIM.

...OTHERS WANTING TO TRAMPLE THE BOTH OF YOU ONCE YOU FALL OUT OF FAVOR WITH THE NEW EMPRESS.

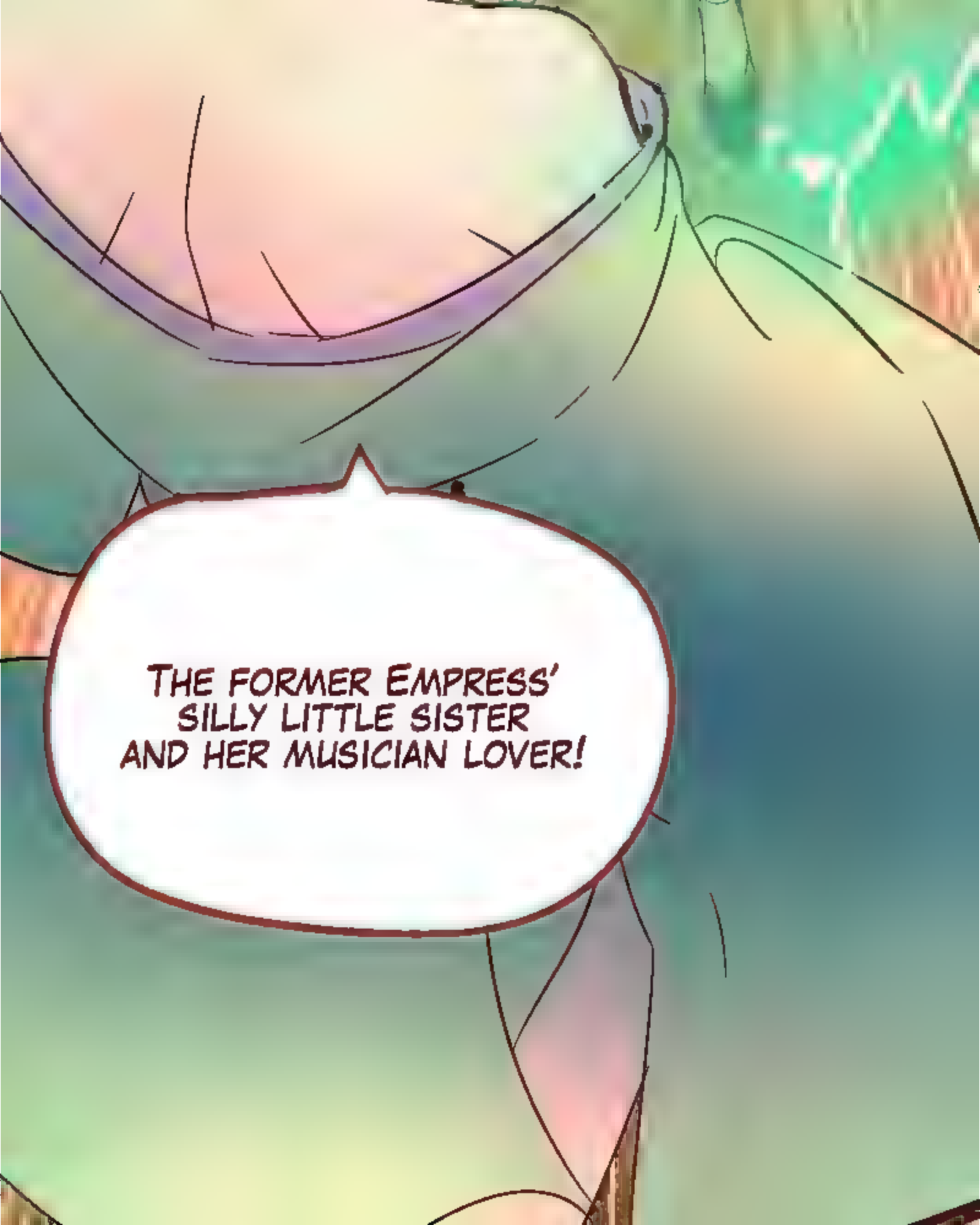
LIKE IT OR NOT,
YOU NEED ME.
AND RIGHT NOW,
I WANT YOU TO PROVE
TO ME THAT YOU'RE
WORTHY OF EVERYTHING I'VE
GIVEN YOU...
...BY EXECUTING THESE
TWO.

WHAT THE-

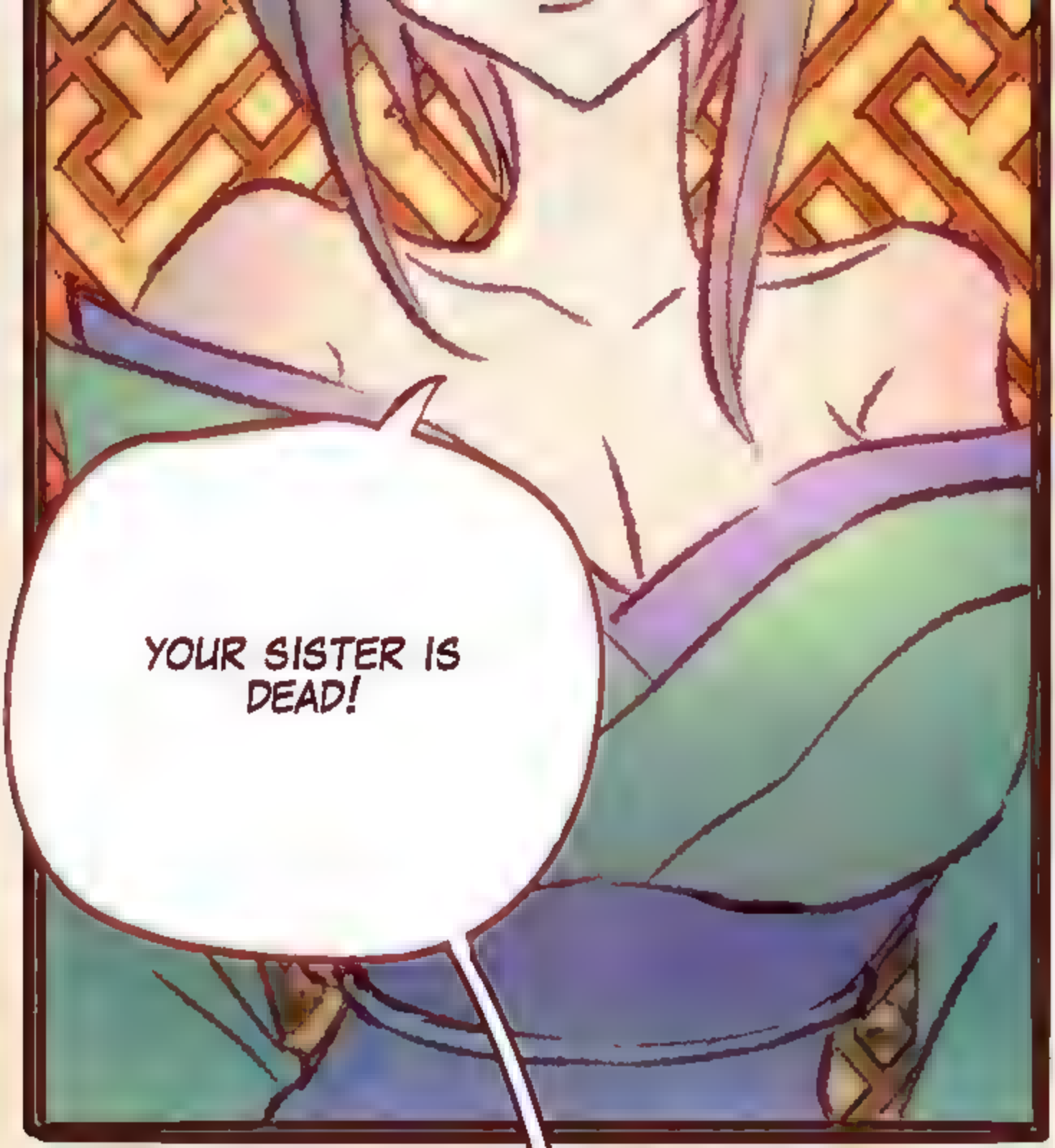
SHE BROKE MY GAMUT SHIELD?!

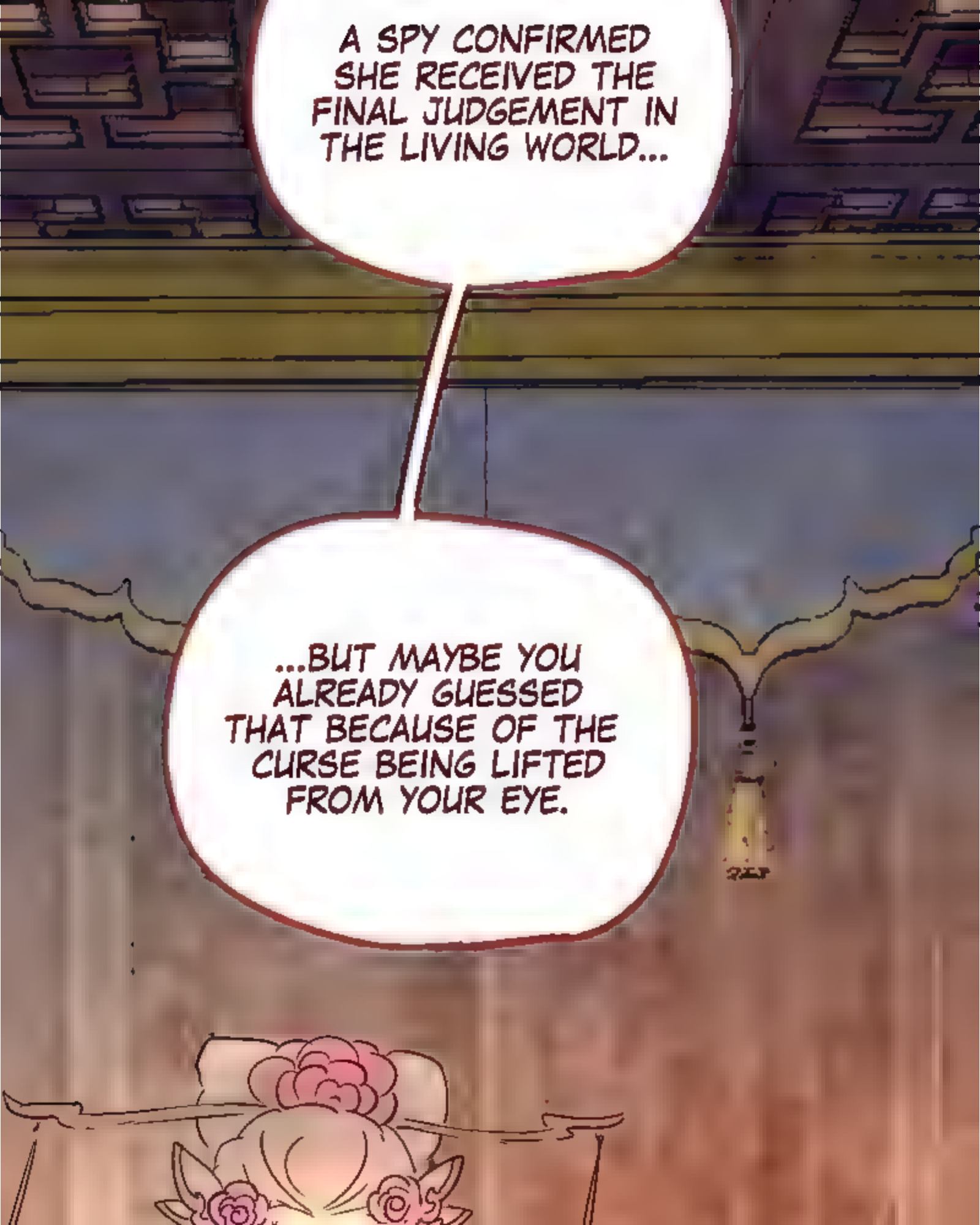
I WAS WONDERING WHO HAD THE NERVE TO SPY ON ME,

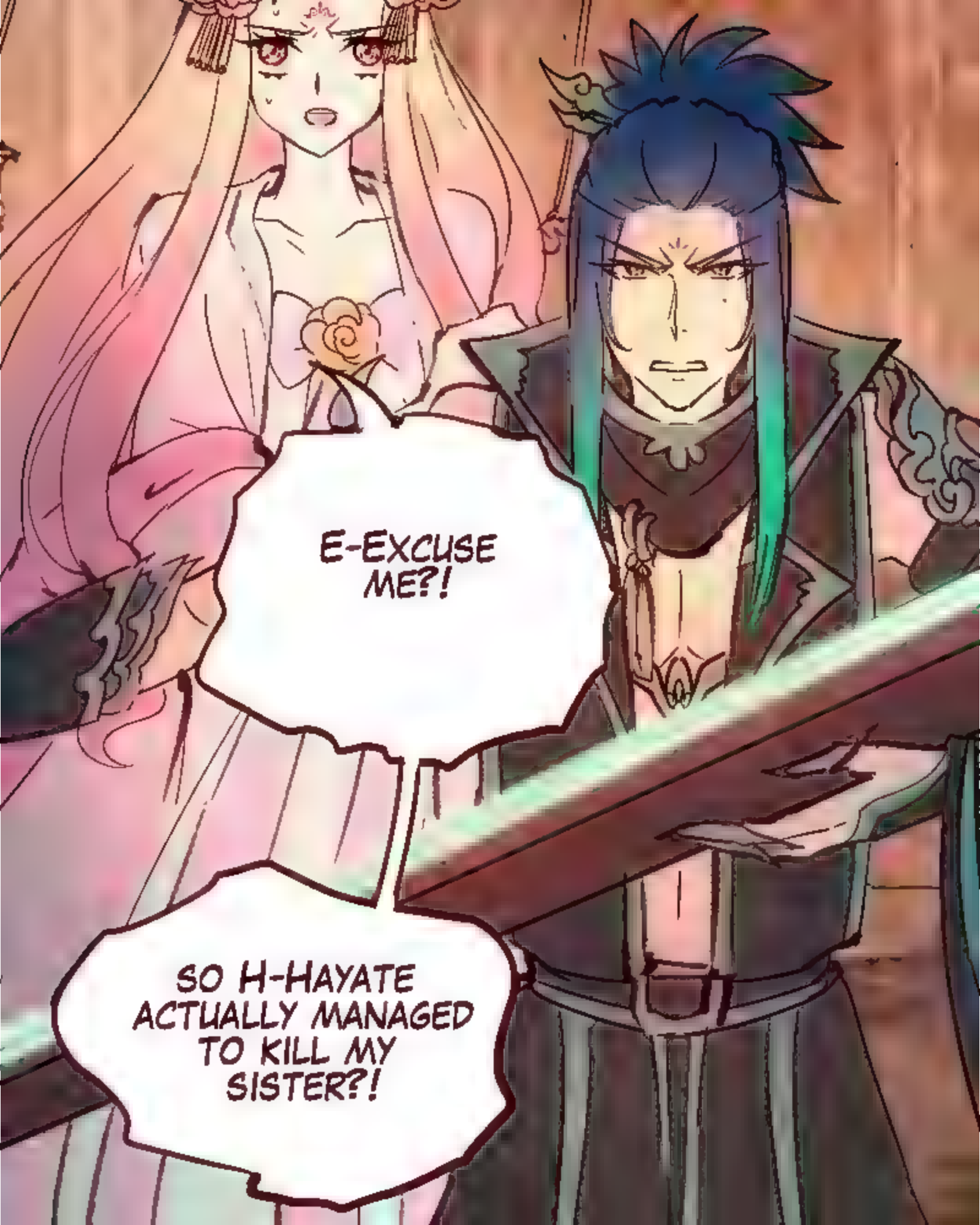
...AND LOOK AT WHO DECIDED TO JOIN THE PARTY!


THE FORMER EMPRESS'
SILLY LITTLE SISTER
AND HER MUSICIAN LOVER!

SINCE YOU WENT OUT OF YOUR WAY TO GREET ME...LET ME TELL YOU THE GOOD NEWS!

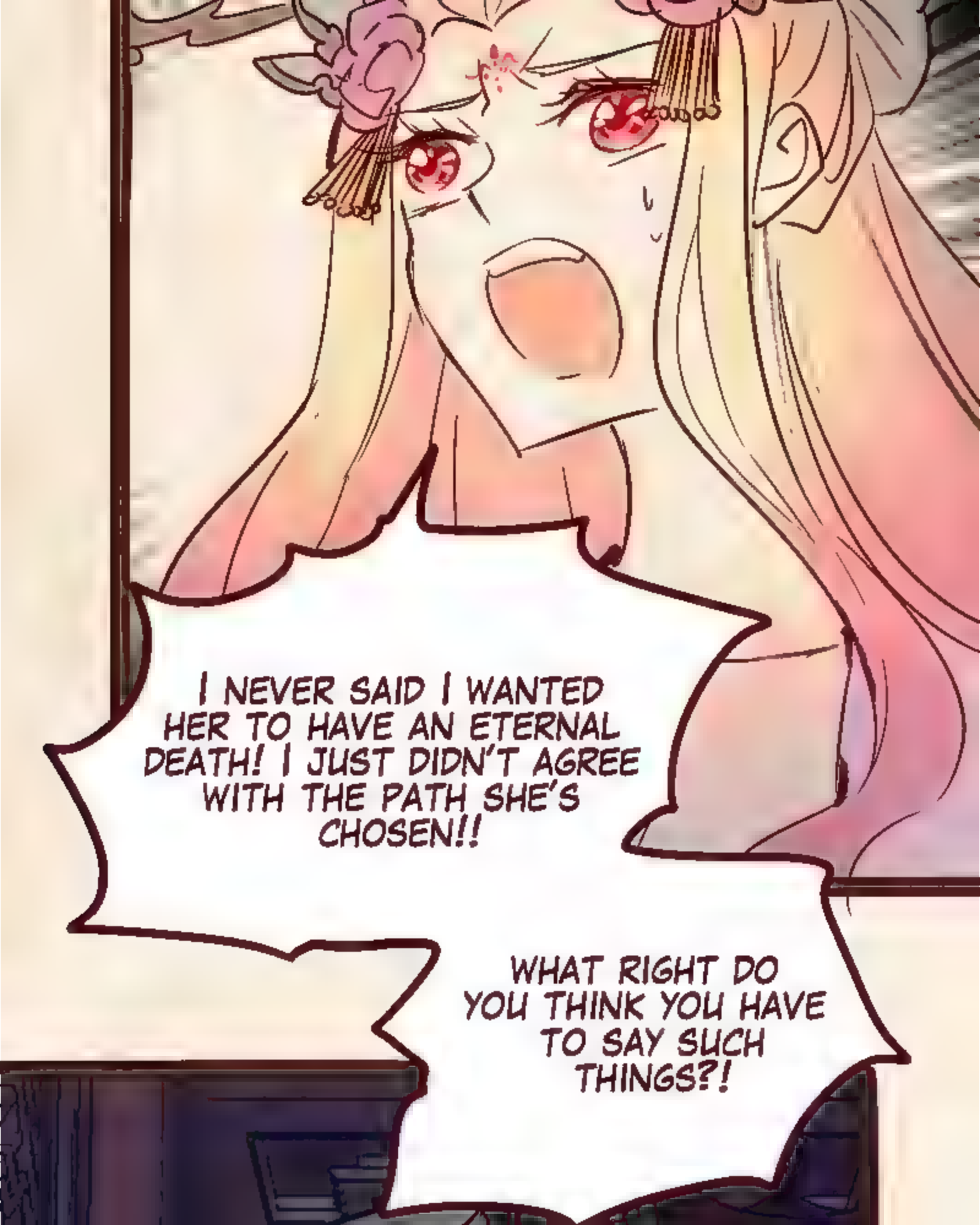

YOUR SISTER IS DEAD!


A SPY CONFIRMED SHE RECEIVED THE FINAL JUDGEMENT IN THE LIVING WORLD...
...BUT MAYBE YOU ALREADY GUESSED THAT BECAUSE OF THE CURSE BEING LIFTED FROM YOUR EYE.


E-EXCUSE ME?!
SO H-HAYATE ACTUALLY MANAGED TO KILL MY SISTER?!

Be careful, princess! If consort Mei is capable of dragging us out from my seal, then she definitely has the illosury power to manipulate you into believing her bullshit!
Huh? What's with that worried look? Didn't you

ALWAYS DREAM OF MADONNA'S DEATH?
NOW THAT THE PAIN IS GONE, AND YOUR LIFESPAN EXTENDED...
ISN'T IT TIME FOR A CELEBRATION? SHE CAN NO LONGER REINCARNATE!


I NEVER SAID I WANTED HER TO HAVE AN ETERNAL DEATH! I JUST DIDN'T AGREE WITH THE PATH SHE'S CHOSEN!!
WHAT RIGHT DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE TO SAY SUCH THINGS?!

PFFFT...IT SEEMS THAT YOU DON'T HATE YOUR SISTER AS MUCH AS I THOUGHT YOU DID.
WHICH MAKES ME LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR

NEXT REACTION EVEN MORE...WERE YOU AWARE THAT YOUR SISTER CARED ABOUT YOU THIS ENTIRE TIME?

WHAT PUSHED HER INTO A CORNER AND SPED HER DEATH-
...WAS YOUR IGNORANCE

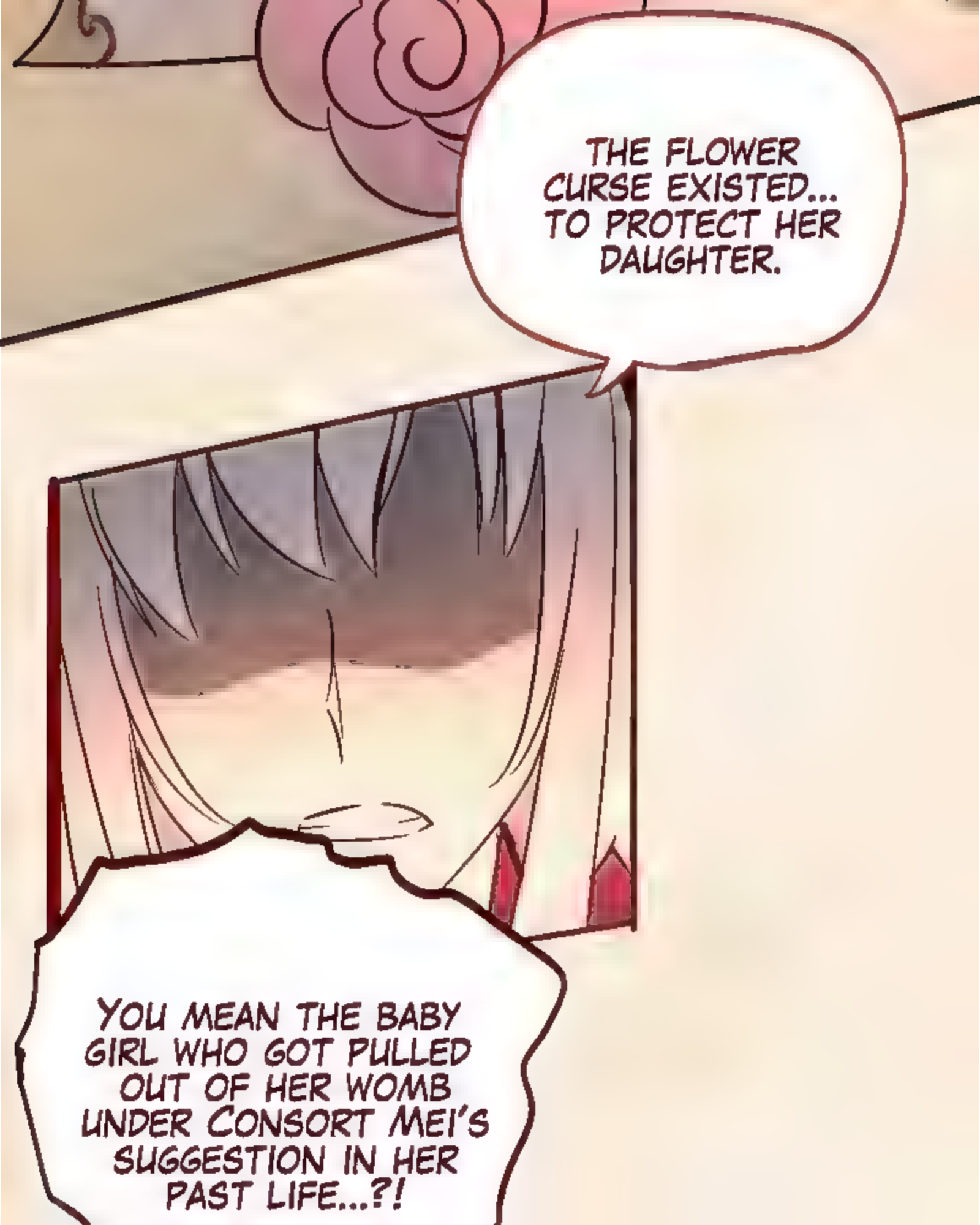
OF THE ENTIRE SITUATION!

?!!
DID YOU SERIOUSLY ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT THE CURSE ON YOUR RIGHT EYE WAS REALLY PLACED THERE TO PREVENT YOU FROM TAKING OVER HER THRONE?

OR MAYBE YOU JUST ENJOYED PLAYING THE ROLE OF THE VICTIM?
...IF IT WEREN'T FOR THAT CURSE...

...MADONNA WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO STOP YOU FROM SACRIFICING YOURSELF FOR HER.
WHAT...DO YOU MEAN?

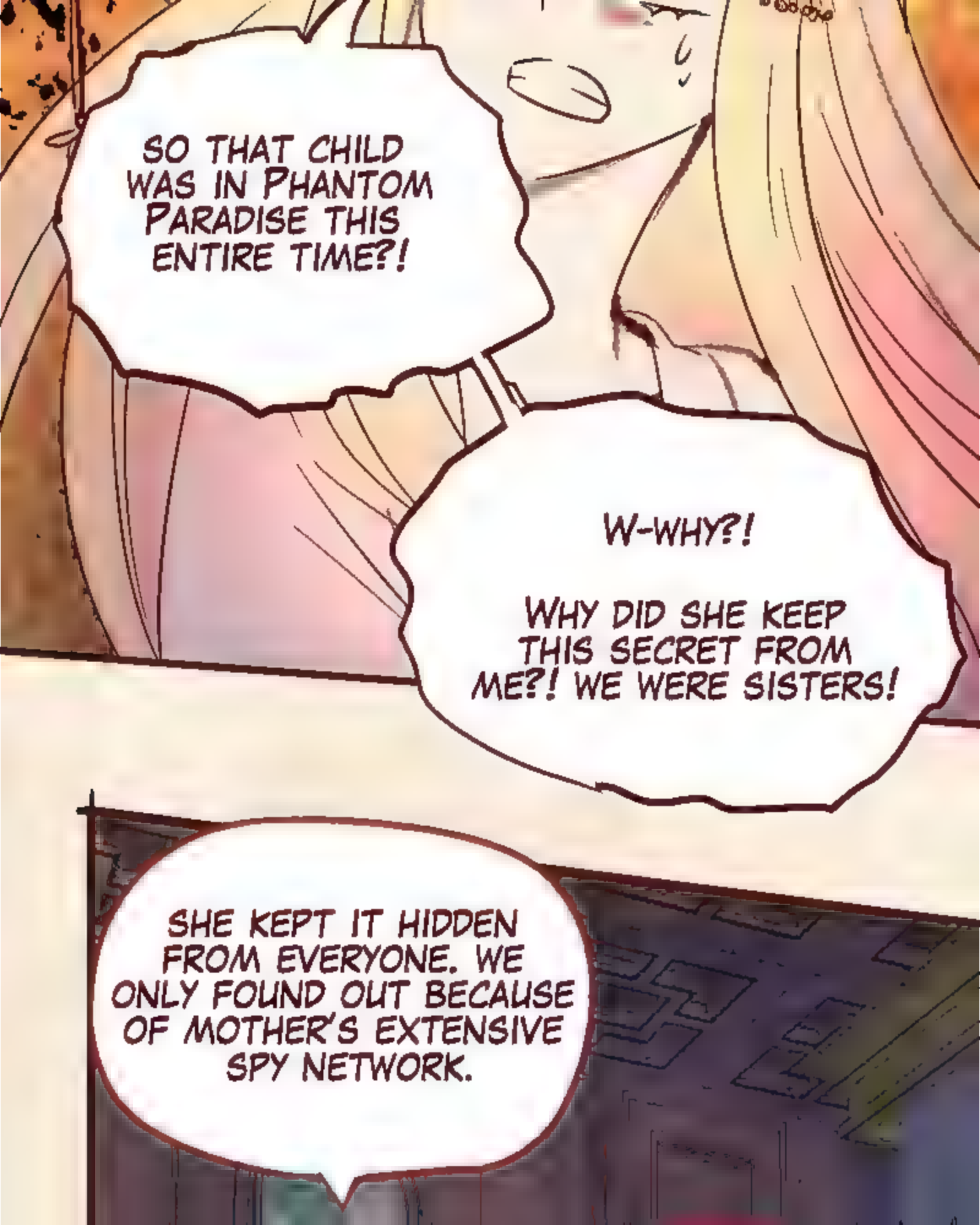
WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE FLOWER CURSE MY SISTER PLACED ON ME?!

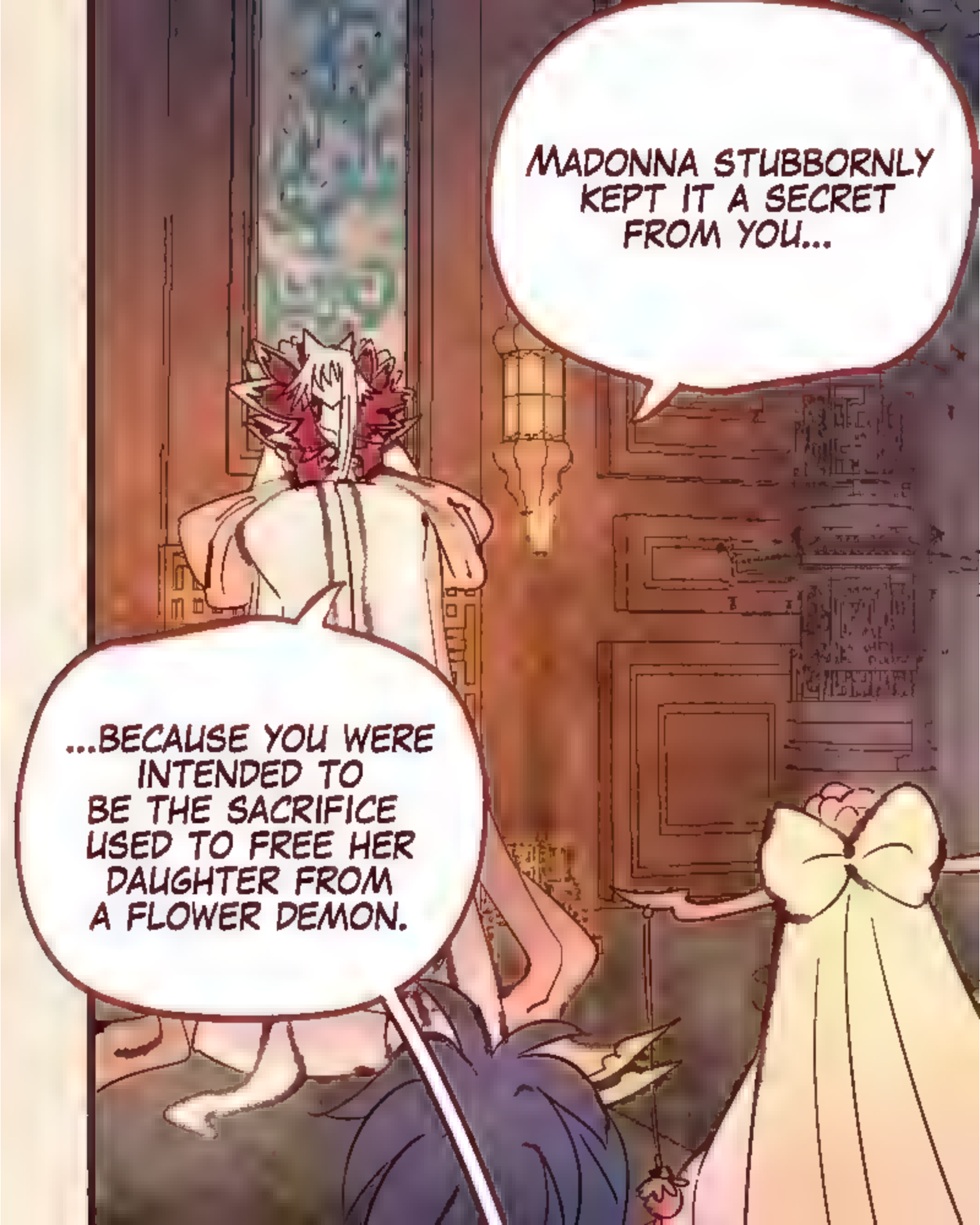

THE FLOWER CURSE EXISTED... TO PROTECT HER DAUGHTER.
YOU MEAN THE BABY GIRL WHO GOT PULLED OUT OF HER WOMB UNDER CONSORT MEI'S SUGGESTION IN HER PAST LIFE...?!

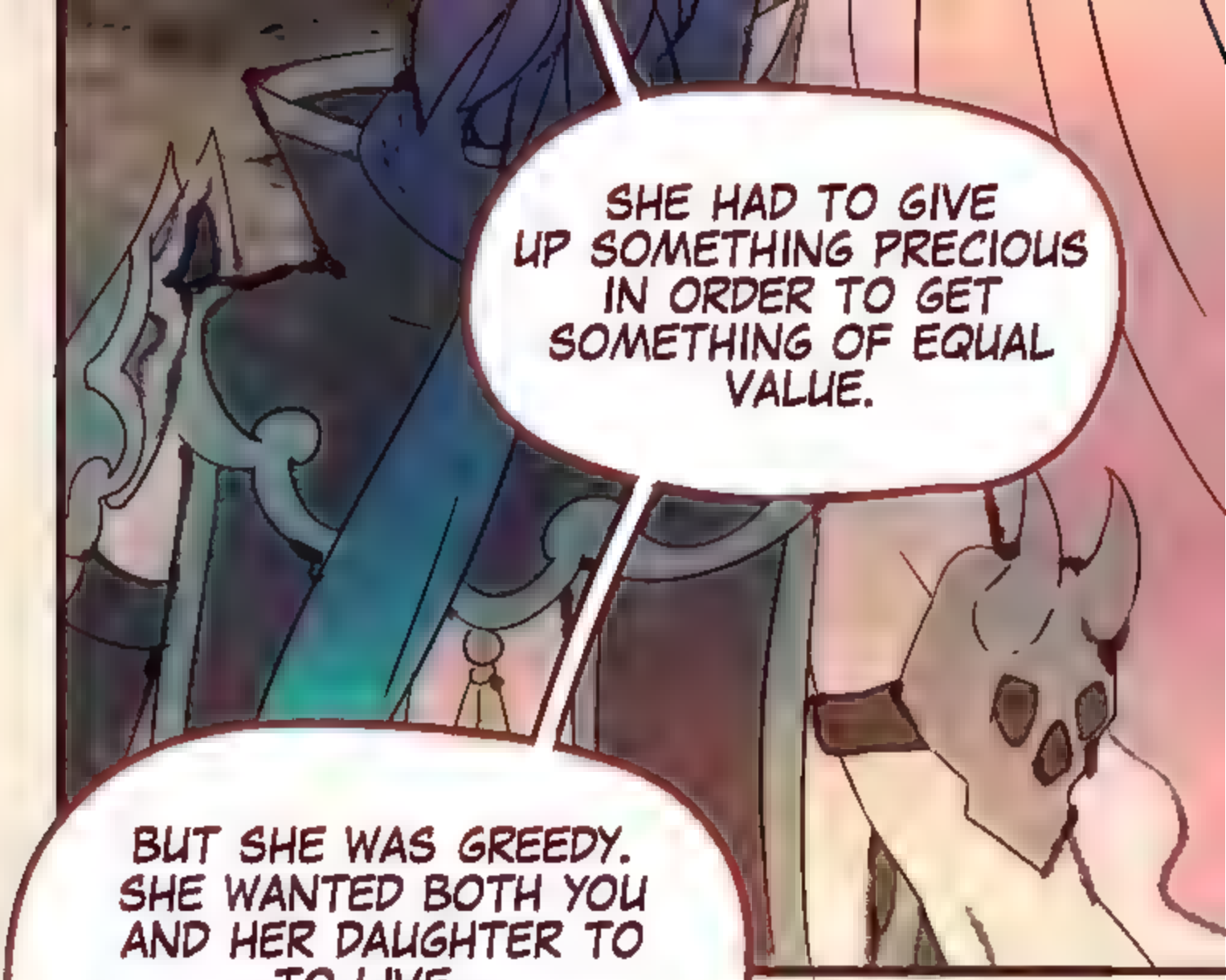
WAIT, AREN'T YOU SUPPPOSED TO BE A CROWNED CONSORT OF MADONNA'S?
WERE YOU CONSPIRING WITH CONSORT MEI ALL ALONG?!
YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW WHAT MY

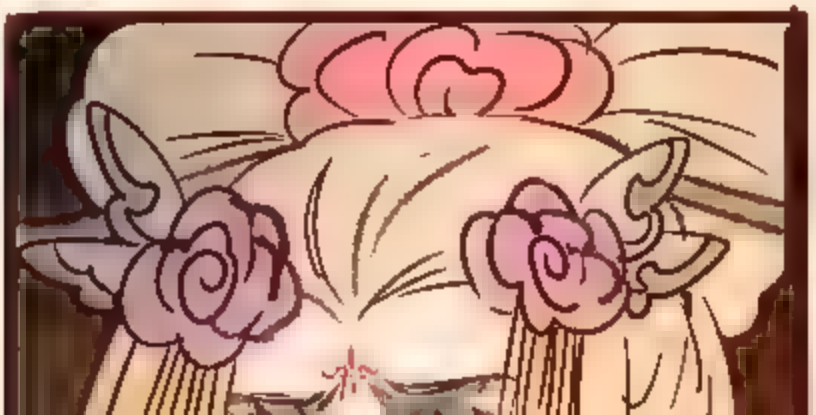
INTENTIONS ARE.
I JUST WANTED TO GIVE YOU SOME CLARITY BEFORE I CARRIED OUT MY CONTRACT.
YOUR ASSUMPTIONS ARE CORRECT.

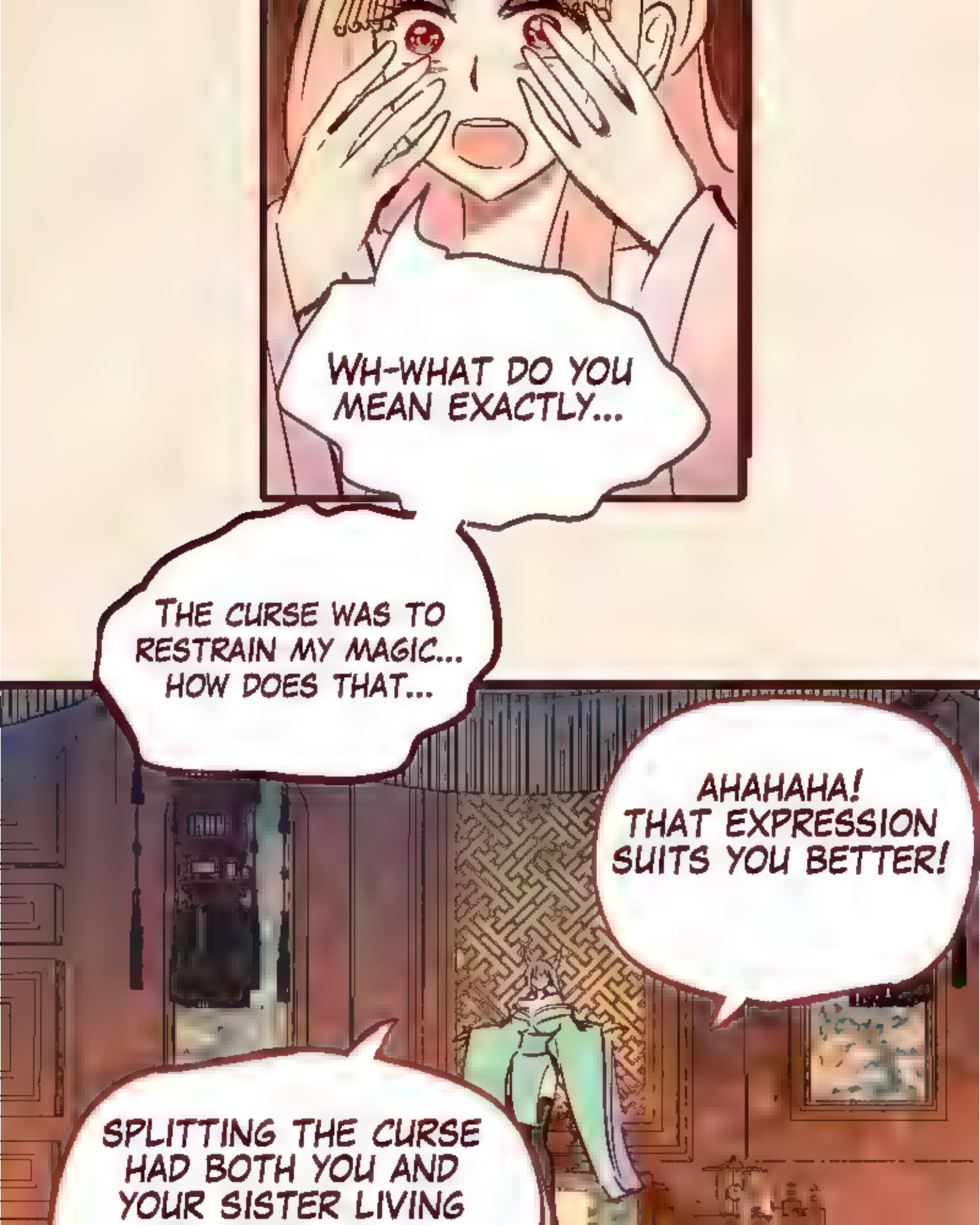
MADONNA WANTED TO HIDE HER PRESENCE FROM YOU IN HELL.

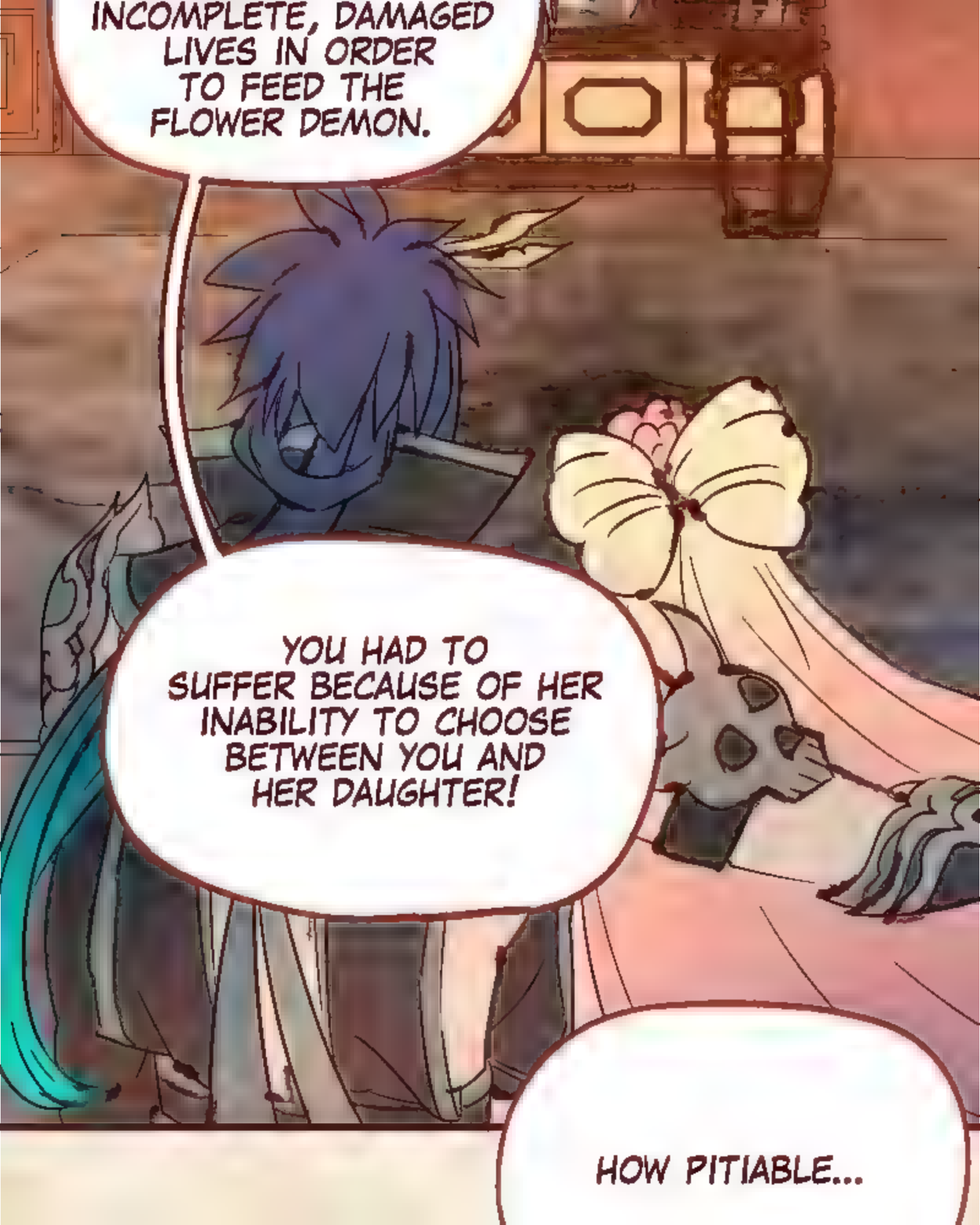

SO THAT CHILD WAS IN PHANTOM PARADISE THIS ENTIRE TIME?!
W-WHY?!
WHY DID SHE KEEP THIS SECRET FROM ME?! WE WERE SISTERS!
SHE KEPT IT HIDDEN FROM EVERYONE. WE ONLY FOUND OUT BECAUSE OF MOTHER'S EXTENSIVE SPY NETWORK.


MADONNA STUBBORNLY KEPT IT A SECRET FROM YOU...
...BECAUSE YOU WERE INTENDED TO BE THE SACRIFICE USED TO FREE HER DAUGHTER FROM A FLOWER DEMON.

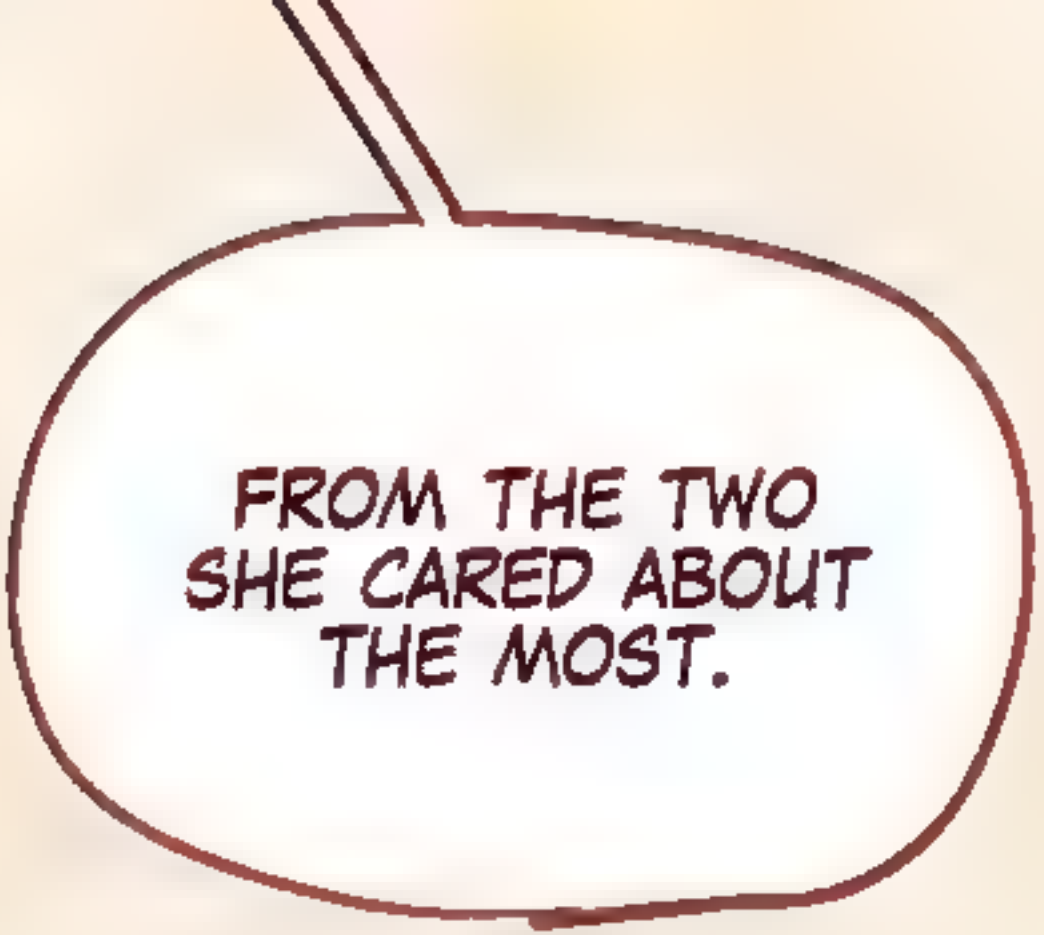

SHE HAD TO GIVE UP SOMETHING PRECIOUS IN ORDER TO GET SOMETHING OF EQUAL VALUE.
BUT SHE WAS GREEDY. SHE WANTED BOTH YOU AND HER DAUGHTER TO TO LIVE... SO SHE OPTED TO SPLIT THE CURSE WITH YOU.




WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN EXACTLY...
THE CURSE WAS TO RESTRAIN MY MAGIC... HOW DOES THAT...
AHAHAHA! THAT EXPRESSION SUITS YOU BETTER!
SPLITTING THE CURSE HAD BOTH YOU AND YOUR SISTER LIVING


INCOMPLETE, DAMAGED LIVES IN ORDER TO FEED THE FLOWER DEMON.
YOU HAD TO SUFFER BECAUSE OF HER INABILITY TO CHOOSE BETWEEN YOU AND HER DAUGHTER!
HOW PITIABLE...

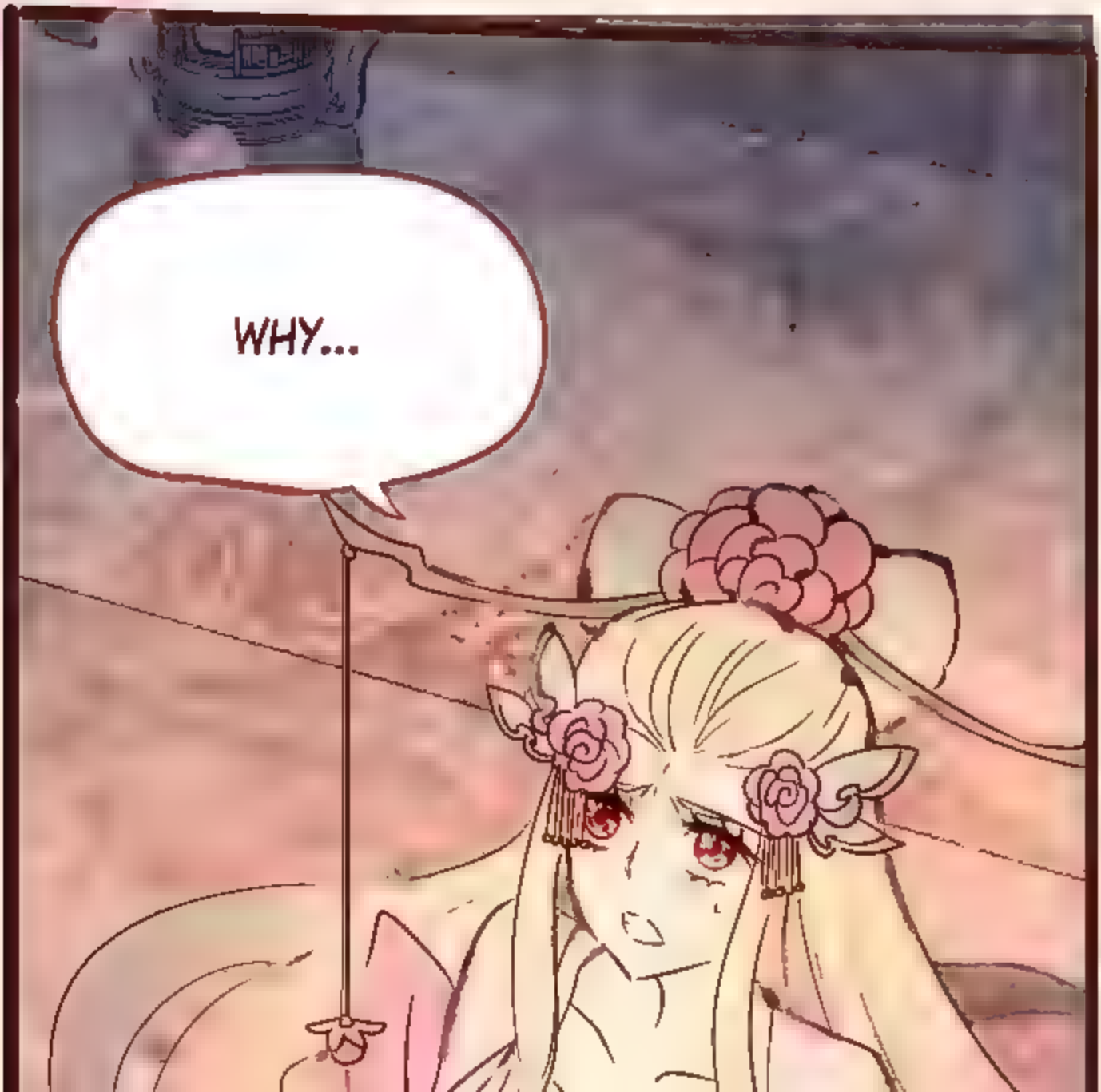
SHE ENDED UP HAVING TO DISTANCE HERSELF...

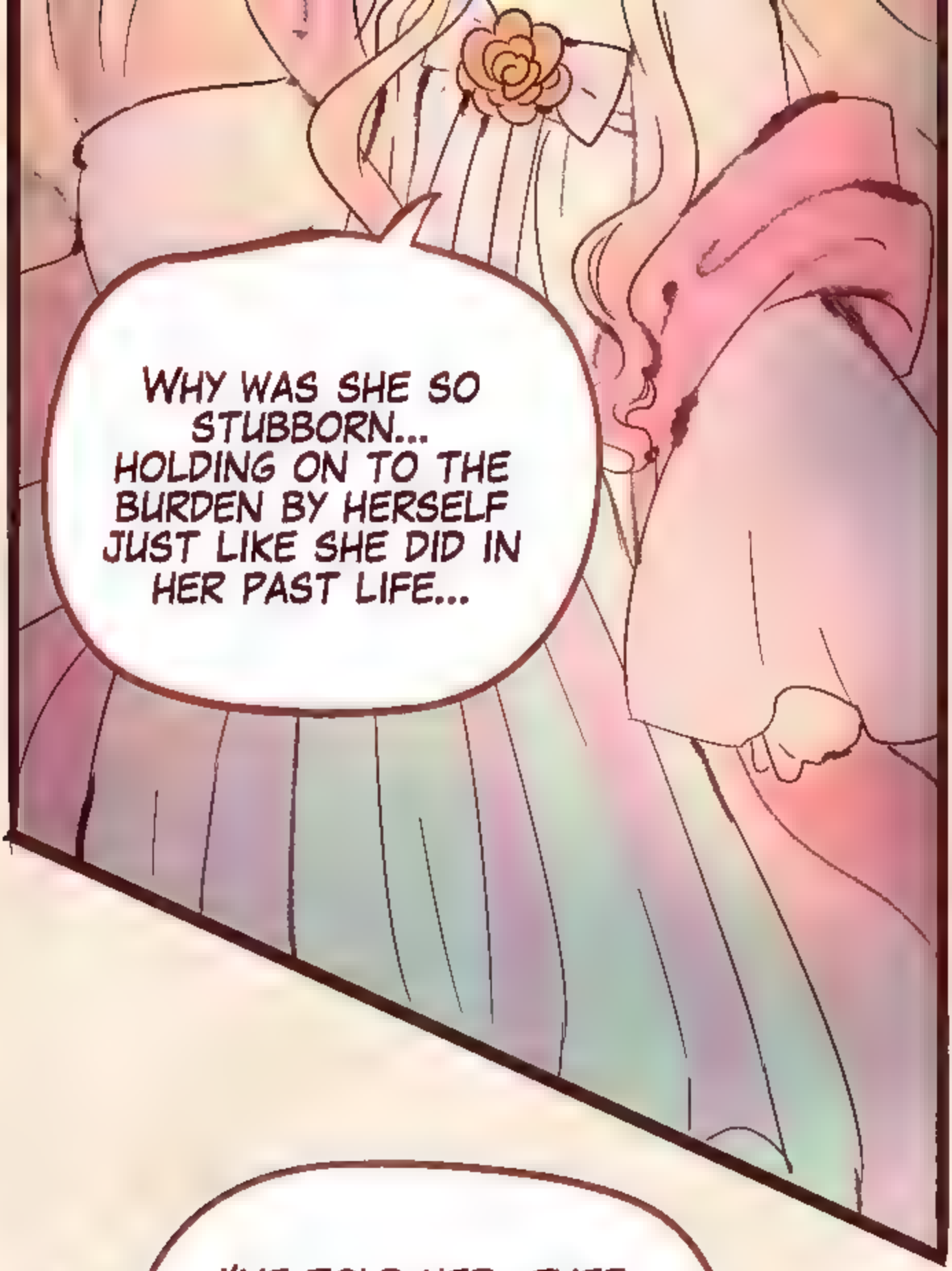

FROM THE TWO
SHE CARED ABOUT
THE MOST.

DIDN'T YOU THINK HER CHANGE IN BEHAVIOUR WAS ODD?

AH...BUT YOU COULDN'T HAVE NOTICED BECAUSE OF YOUR SELFISHNESS...
...BY FOCUSING SOLELY

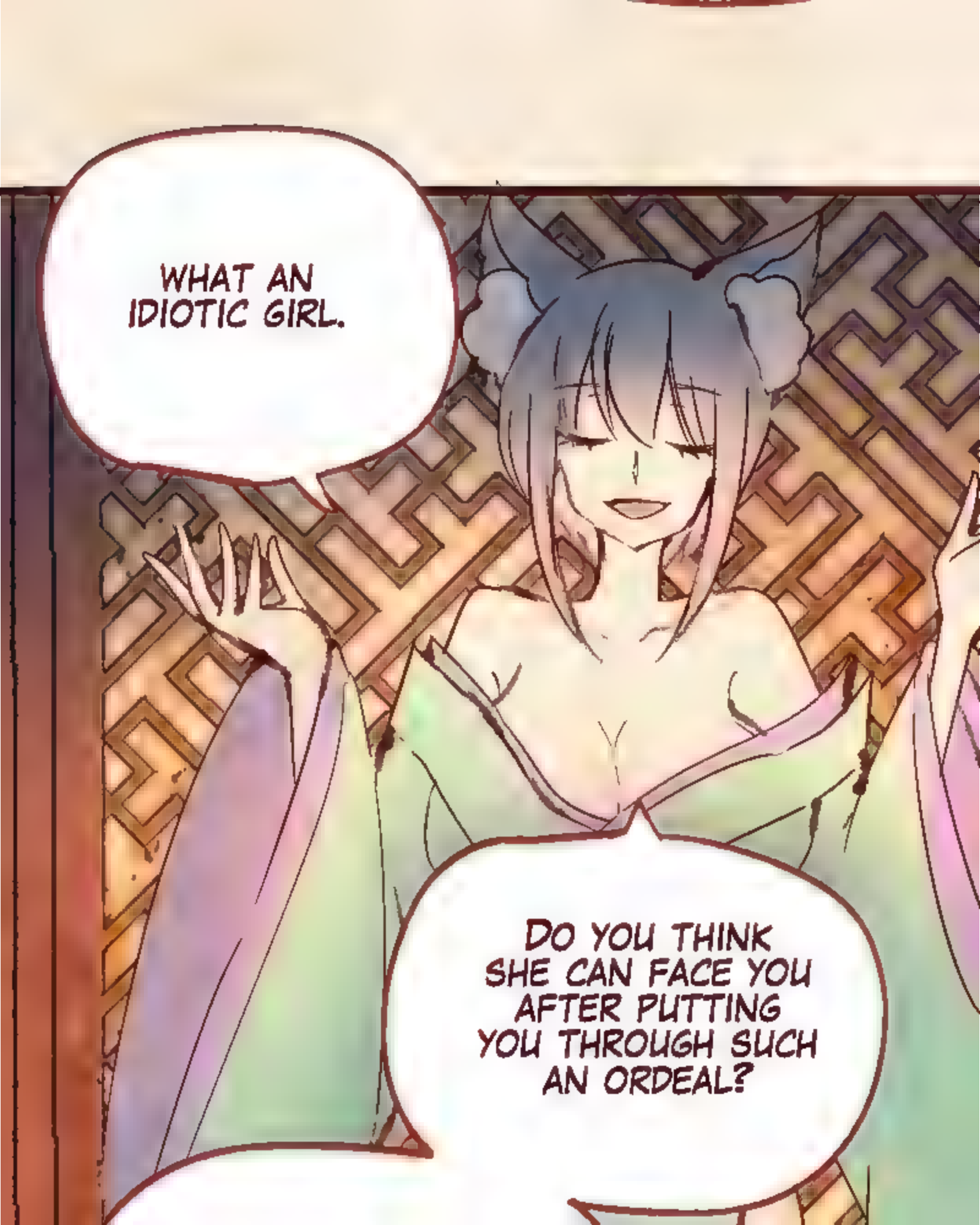
ON YOUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH YOUR MUSICIAN LOVER.

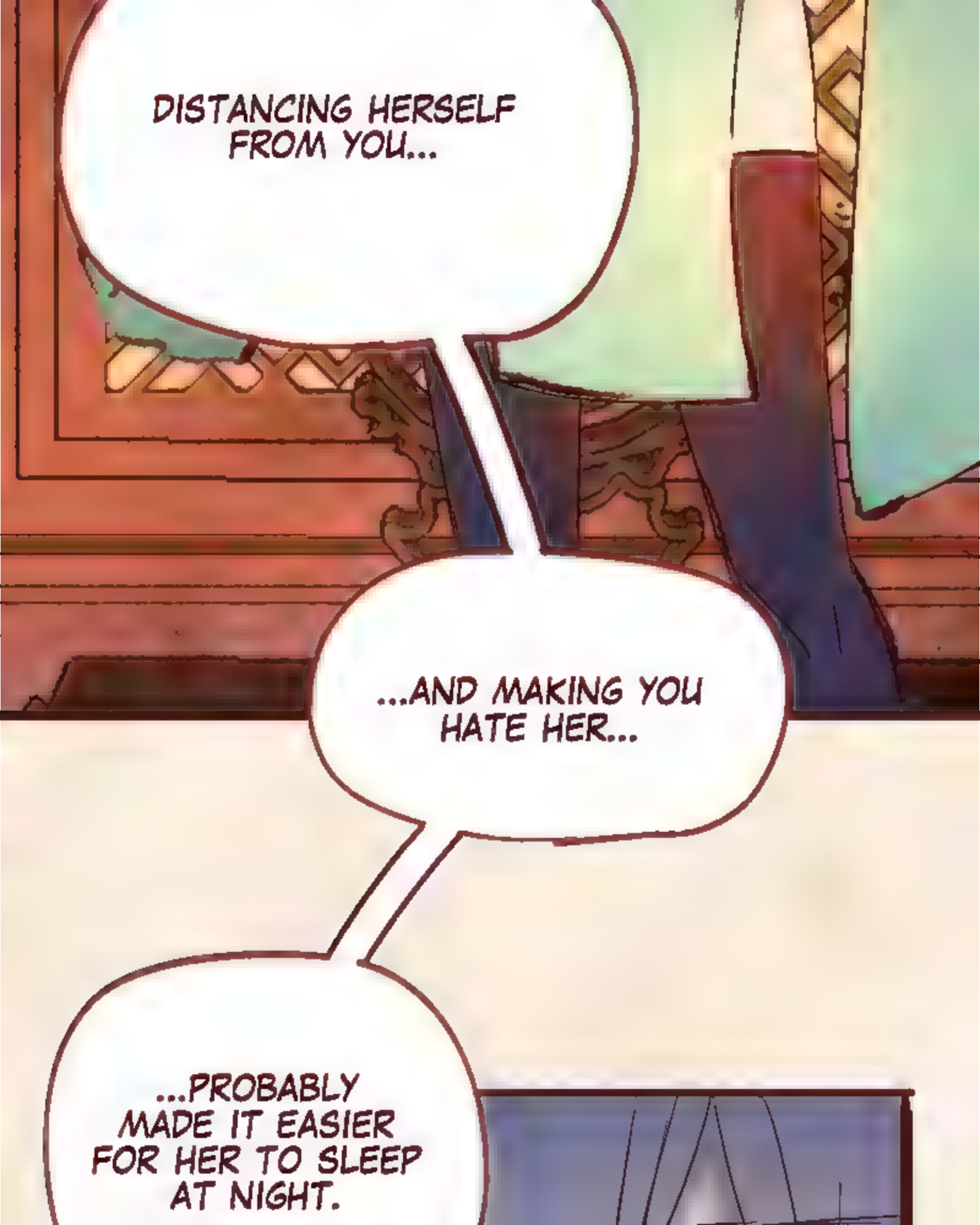




I'VE TOLD HER...EVER SINCE WE WERE LITTLE... TO RELY ON ME

THAT SHE'LL NEVER BE ALONE.
THAT I'D ALWAYS BE THERE FOR HER DURING THE WORST OF TIMES!

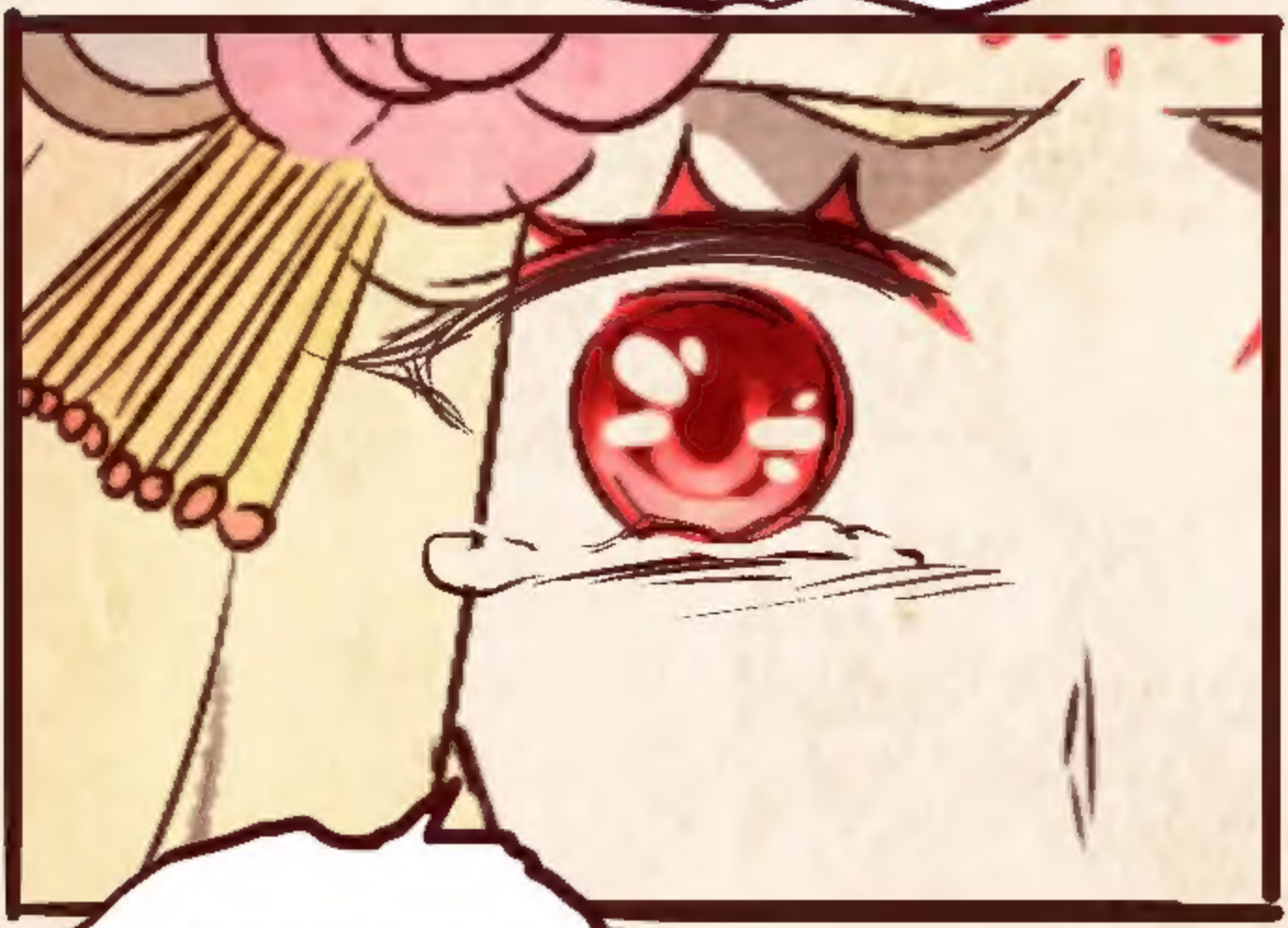

WHAT AN IDIOTIC GIRL.
DO YOU THINK SHE CAN FACE YOU AFTER PUTTING YOU THROUGH SUCH AN ORDEAL?


DISTANCING HERSELF FROM YOU...
...AND MAKING YOU HATE HER...
...PROBABLY MADE IT EASIER FOR HER TO SLEEP AT NIGHT.

TO THINK...
THE MOST POWERFUL BEING IN PHANTOM PARADISE...
HAVING
TO ENDURE SUCH

MISERIES. I CAN'T HELP BUT LAUGH AT THE WHOLE SITUATION!
NO...NO...WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME ALL OF THIS..?

AFTER ALL THE YEARS IN PHANTOM PARADISE... BEING SO COLD TO ONE ANOTHER...



HOW IS THIS THE TRUTH...OF EVERYTHING ABOUT THE CURSE...

NO...

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